CLAIMS:

1. A method for the screening of ligands which bind a cerebral cortical voltage-dependent calcium channel $\alpha_2\delta$-1 subunit, said method comprising the steps of:

- contacting a secreted soluble recombinant calcium channel $\alpha_2\delta$-1 subunit polypeptide with:
  - a ligand of interest; and
  - a labelled compound which binds the $\alpha_2\delta$-1 subunit; and
- measuring the level of binding of the labelled compound to the $\alpha_2\delta$-1 subunit.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein said contacting and said binding is in a well of a flashplate.

3. A method according to claim 1, wherein said secreted soluble recombinant calcium channel $\alpha_2\delta$-1 subunit polypeptide is selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14 and 15.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein said secreted soluble recombinant calcium channel $\alpha_2\delta$-1 subunit polypeptide is selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 9 and 15.

5. A method according to claim 1, wherein said secreted soluble recombinant calcium channel $\alpha_2\delta$-1 subunit polypeptide is SEQ ID NO: 9.